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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/869,382	10/01/2001	Jean-Louis Viovy	BET 01/0527	2870

466 7590 11/17/2003

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EXAMINER

OLSEN, KAJ K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1753

DATE MAILED: 11/17/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/869,382

Applicant(s)

VIOVY ET AL.

Examiner

Kaj Olsen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 August 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 32-65 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 32,33,35-53,62 and 63 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 34,54-61,64 and 65 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 32, 33, 35-48, 53, and 62 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by L'Alloret et al (Revue de Institut Francais Du Petrole, 52, 1997, pp. 117-128).
3. L'Alloret discloses a heat-sensitive medium comprising an electrolyte in which a set of block copolymer is dissolved into (the aqueous salt solutions in section 3.2 would constitute an electrolyte). L'Alloret further discloses that the medium has the ability to reversibly transit from the claimed two viscosity states at the claimed two different temperatures (see fig. 7), and the copolymer of L'Alloret has structure consisting of a first polymer segment that is soluble in the electrolyte at temperatures T1 and T2 (e.g. polyacrylic acid (PAA)) with grafts of more than two additional groups that exhibit an LCST (e.g. polyethylene oxide (PEO)) (see section 2, Table 1, and fig. 2 and 3). With respect to the additional groups having greater than fifty atoms along their main chain, the molecular weights of the grafts shown in Table 1 would clearly possess the specified main chain lengths. With respect to the medium being utilized for the separation of species in a separating channel, that is only the intended use of the apparatus and the intended use need not be given further due consideration in determining patentability. The configurations shown in fig. 2 and 3 would constitute comb copolymers giving the claim language its broadest reasonable interpretation.

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4. With respect to claim 62, although L'Alloret does not disclose a capillary electrophoresis device, this claim has no recitation of capillary electrophoresis structure associated with it.

Hence, capillary electrophoresis is only the intended use of the apparatus and the intended use need not be given further due consideration in determining patentability.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 49-52 and 63 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over L'Alloret et al.

7. With respect to the claims, L'Alloret set forth all the limitations of the claims, but did not explicitly set forth the block copolymer existing at the set forth concentrations in the heat-sensitive medium. However, section 3.2 discusses how varying the concentration of polymer/electrolyte solutions varies the properties of the heat-sensitive medium. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize the polymer concentrations of the claims, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233.

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Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 34, 54-61, 64, and 65 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

9. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art does not disclose nor render obvious all the limitations of claim 32 and further comprising either a method of separation or analysis of species using said heat-sensitive medium. With respect to claim 34, the prior art does not disclose nor render obvious the heat-sensitive medium of claim 32 where T2 is between 40 and 80 °C.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kaj Olsen whose telephone number is (703) 305-0506. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 7:00 AM-4:30 PM. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Nam Nguyen, can be reached at (703) 308-3322.

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When filing a fax in Group 1700, please indicate in the header "Official" for papers that are to be entered into the file, and "Unofficial" for draft documents and other communications with the PTO that are not for entry into the file of this application. This will expedite processing of your papers. The fax number for regular communications is (703) 305-3599 and the fax number for after-final communications is (703) 305-5408.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist, whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



Kaj K. Olsen
Patent Examiner
AU 1753
November 16, 2003